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**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

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**PO BOX 202801  
HELENA MT 59620-2801**

**www.sos.mt.gov  
(406) 444-2034  
(406) 444-4249 (FAX)  
(406) 444-9068 (TTY)**

**Linda McCulloch  
Secretary of State**

To: Potential 2014 Independent, Minor Party, and/or Indigent Candidate

From: Linda McCulloch, Secretary of State

Thank you for your inquiry about qualifying as an independent, minor party, and/or indigent candidate for the 2014 election cycle.

Please see below and attached information about filing for office.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretary of State, Elections and Government Services at (406) 444-5346 or [soselections@mt.gov](mailto:soselections@mt.gov) or visit our website at [sos.mt.gov](http://sos.mt.gov).

You may also wish to contact the Commissioner of Political Practices at (406) 444-2942 for campaign finance information.

Links: [Independent, Minor Party or Indigent Candidate Declaration, Oath and Petition](#)  
[Affidavit of Signature Gatherer](#)  
[Title 13 Election Laws](#)



## Information for Independent, Minor Party and Indigent Candidates

Montana Secretary of State Linda McCulloch

Elections and Government Services

[soselections@mt.gov](mailto:soselections@mt.gov) • [sos.mt.gov](http://sos.mt.gov)

### ◆ Filing Deadlines ([13-10-503](#), MCA)

- May 27, 2014      Deadline to submit signed petitions to county election administrators.
- June 2, 2014      Deadline to file Declaration and Oath of Candidacy, and pay filing fee (unless indigent) with appropriate filing officer

Please check with the [Commissioner of Political Practices](#) regarding campaign finance filing requirements.

### ◆ Signature Requirements ([13-10-502](#), MCA)

- 5% or more of the total votes cast for the successful candidate for the same office at the last general election

2014 Offices	Certified Signatures Required
✓ United States Senator	17,415
✓ United States Representative	12,774
✓ Public Service Commissioner #1	2,009
✓ Public Service Commissioner #5	2,123
✓ State Senator	257*
✓ State Representative	129*

\* After 2013 redistricting, the Office of the Secretary of State determined the 2014 Senate and House signature requirements, pursuant to [13-10-502](#), MCA.

#### ◆ Other Important Information

- While there is no earliest date to submit candidate petition signatures to county election administrators, the candidate declaration form cannot be filed with the appropriate filing officer before **January 9, 2014**.
- Independent Candidates:
  - ✓ Under [13-10-507](#), MCA, a person seeking office as an independent candidate may **not** be associated with a political party for 1 year prior to the submission of the candidate's nomination petition. For the purposes of the law, "associated with a political party" means having run for office as a partisan candidate or having held an office with a political party designation.
  - ✓ Individuals cannot file as independent candidates (or as party candidates) for nonpartisan offices.
  - ✓ Qualified independent candidates appear on the General Election ballot only.
- Under [13-10-602](#), MCA, a political party and its regularly nominated candidates, members, and officers have the sole and exclusive right to the use of the party name. A candidate for office may not use any word of the name of any other political party or organization other than that by which the candidate is nominated. An independent candidate may not use any word of the name of any existing political party or organization in his or her candidacy.
- An individual who files as an indigent candidate is not required to pay a filing fee and must submit the same total number of signatures as an independent or minor party candidate. A candidate who files as an indigent-independent candidate or as an indigent-minor party candidate is only required to file one set of petition signatures.
- Qualified candidates for a non-qualified party generally appear on the General Election ballot only.